

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4-24 and 26-33 are currently pending in the subject application and are presently under consideration. Claims 1, 7 and 9 are amended as shown on pp. 4-5 of the Reply. Claims 20-24 and 26-33 are withdrawn. In addition, the specification has been amended as indicated on pp. 2-3.

Favorable reconsideration of the subject patent application is respectfully requested in view of the comments and amendments herein.

I. Objections to the Specification

The Specification has been objected to because of the following informalities:

On page 13, line 19, “remote device 720” should be changed to “remote device 710”.

On page 13, line 23, “remote device 700” should be changed to “remote device 710”.

These changes are made precisely as suggested by Examiner. Two additional instances of similar mistakes are also found and corrected. Withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested in view of the amendments to the Specification.

II. Rejection of Claims 7-10 Under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 7-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claims 7 and 9 are reworded to address points made by Examiner and should now be in condition for allowance. Examiner’s rejection of claims 8 and 10 is based on dependency from claims 7 and 9, respectively, and as such, these claims should also now be in condition for allowance.

III. Rejection of Claims 1 and 4-19 Under 35 U.S.C. §101

Claims 1 and 4-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. In view of Examiner’s suggestions, independent claim 1 is revised to claim computer-readable storage media in which the access and security components are encoded. The asset component clearly pertains to physical assets associated with the automation procedure. As such, amended claim 1 now clearly recites only statutory

material. All other claims depend from claim 1 and thus pertain to statutory material as a consequence of these dependences. We thus respectfully request withdrawal of these rejections.

IV. Rejection of Claims 1, 4-6, and 9-19 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1, 4-6, and 9-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Rammler (US 2003/0105535) in view of Salowey (US 7,370,350). In view of current amendments to independent claim 1, Examiner is requested to reconsider these rejections.

Application relates to a secure system for granting access to components of an industrial automation process. Rammler recites a system for using a palm-type PC as a human-machine interface to a controller in an industrial automation process. Through this interface, individual users can be granted access. Security is maintained by limiting access to a valid IP address.

Salowey recites procedures for reauthenticating users of computing devices communicating over a network. Efficiency is achieved by storing data required for authentication after a first authentication request. As such, second reauthentication requests can be processed more rapidly by merely sending the data saved following the first request. As pointed out by Examiner, Salowey recites a time component that limits access to a specified time window. Examiner states that Rammler does not recite such a component and further states that combination of this teaching of Salowey with Rammler would have been obvious.

Claim 1 has been amended to disclaim cited art through clarification of what is meant by “automated” in describing the security assessment component. As amended, it recites, in part, “a security component, encoded in a computer-readable storage medium, that *regulates access to the industrial automation device* based upon the security attribute and includes a security assessment component that performs automated security threat analysis *based in part on the modeling of the industrial automation device, a network access type and at least one of a formal threat analysis, a vulnerability analysis, a factory topology mapping, or an attack tree analysis* to determine whether access should be granted to the industrial automation device.” (emphasis added)

Industrial automation environments can be much more complicated than the controller recited in Rammler. Often there are many asset components with greater or lesser influence over other asset components and the automation system as a whole. It is clearly advantageous, for example, to rapidly clear workers required to maintain or repair low-level, isolated components

while limiting access to asset components or subprocesses with the potential for major disruption if subjected to malice or inappropriate intervention. This sort of distinction cannot be made by systems described in cited art without recourse to human intervention. By contrast, applicant claims automation of this decision process because the security component can operate in an automated fashion. Granting routine access to low-level components without necessity for human intervention and prespecified IP addresses is one case that highlights utility of limitations not taught or suggested by Rammler or Salowey, either alone or in combination.

In view of comments and amendments presented, we respectfully request withdrawal of rejection of claim 1. As claims 4-19 depend from claim 1, and as claim 1 should now be in condition for allowance, these claims should also be allowed.

CONCLUSION

The present application is believed to be in condition for allowance in view of the above comments and amendments. A prompt action to such end is earnestly solicited.

In the event any fees are due in connection with this document, the Commissioner is authorized to charge those fees to Deposit Account No. 50-1063 [ALBRP303USA].

Should the Examiner believe a telephone interview would be helpful to expedite favorable prosecution, the Examiner is invited to contact applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,
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